



# Shinto Shrines: A Guide to the Sacred Sites of Japan's Ancient Religion

*Joseph Cali, John Dougill*

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In recent years, there has been a significant surge in interest in spiritual matters, including a noticeable move toward Eastern religions such as Shintoism. Until now, however, there has been no resource in English providing extensive information about Shinto shrines for the many Westerners who travel to Japan to visit these sites.

With over 100 color photos, fifty black-and-white detailed illustrations, and maps, this handy guidebook showcases sixty-six major Shinto shrines, many of which are World Heritage Sites or National Treasures. In their opening section, the authors introduce both basic and fascinating aspects of this ancient religion, which remains intricately woven into the very fabric of Japanese culture. They discuss the history of Shintoism and its fundamental tenets; its relationship to Buddhism, Confucianism, Taoism, and other Eastern belief systems; customs and rites; and types of festivals.

The Guide portion of the book is organized by region of the country. For each shrine, there is a comprehensive entry highlighting important spiritual features, physical features of the structure itself (architecture, design, and art), associated festivals, and enshrined gods. The authors also note the prayers offered, and the best times for travelers to visit. The comprehensive histories of each shrine, taken as a whole, provides a comprehensive look at Shinto and its connection to such aspects of Japanese culture as martial arts, samurai, pirates and poetry. An excellent jumping off point on a tour of Japan and its culture.

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